

## HIGHLIGHT REPORT: CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

### Women-only Zumba sessions with Sport England

The Church Street Community Champions received funding from Sport England to engage inactive women in Church Street in regular physical activity. In partnership with Greenhouse Sports Centre, they set up Zumba sessions and promoted them through friends, family, neighbours and stalls on Church Street market. They successfully engaged over 100 inactive women over the course of the project and created a safe space for women to exercise together. Champions called residents to remind them, went to collect them from their homes to take them to the sessions and, in some cases, spent months persuading residents to come along. The classes have been so successful in attracting women to Greenhouse Sports that the centre has taken them over so that they can continue into the future.

One woman said, *'I have been coming for five weeks and the sessions are wonderful. My son is four months old and after his birth I felt down. I don't have family here and when I come here, I feel as though I came to a party at my family's house.'*

### Communita at Penfold Community Hub



This year the Champions' long standing Communita session for elderly residents at Penfold Community Hub went from strength to strength. The session is run totally by Champions with no staff involvement and has around 55 residents that attend during the year. They play games, paint, chat and have afternoon tea together and do a special celebration at Christmas. This year they had a party for

one resident that turned 90, singing happy birthday to her in different languages.

The session provides support to isolated older people, some of whom have dementia, to have regular social contact. They look forward to seeing the Champions each week. Many of the Champions don't have elderly relatives in this country and so relish the opportunity

to get to know and make a difference to older residents. They make sure everyone is made to feel special through a hug, painting together or a competitive game of dominoes. One of the residents, Peggy, said, *'I feel very happy and blessed to be able to experience this tea and cake time. It felt like one of those luxurious tea places but even better.'*



## ■ Junior Champions at Fourth Feathers

This year the Church Street Champions started a Junior Champions afterschool club in partnership with Fourth Feathers Youth & Community Centre.

Young people aged from 7 to 15 learnt about healthy eating, asthma, the flu and nature and mental health.

Each session includes making a healthy snack together, even including vegetable cupcakes! The sessions have been very popular, broadening the reach of the Champions and bringing parents and children into the centre that had not visited before. After one session on healthy snacks, Fourth Feathers even decided to change their snack policy: **'As a result we are now offering rice cakes as an alternative to bread and with the warmer weather re-introduced fresh vegetables, so thank you all for inspiring the children.'**

Comments from children include:

**'My brother suffers from asthma and when he has an asthma attack I don't know what to do with him; but now after I did the quizzes with the community champions, I've become more aware what I need to do first when my brother has an asthma attack and when I need to call the ambulance.'**

**'I really like to make scary healthy faces with a cracker and cheese, tomato and cucumber, mint. The mint is tasty, very nice I'm going to tell my parents to buy mint. I didn't know it tastes nice because this is the first time I tasted it.'**

**'I like the wrap because I found that the vegetables go well with the wrap and is my first time I do wrap, I have not made one before. I am going to do it at home with my family.'**



## ■ Spotlight on Community & Maternity Champion, Kayrya

Kayrya heard about the Community and Maternity Champions from a friend in Spring 2019 and really liked the sound of it. She started to volunteer with the Community Champions at their weekly Communita session at Penfold Hub, playing games, doing art and chatting with elderly residents. After two months she decided to train as a Maternity Champion and attended the Birth and Beyond Community Supporter and Breastfeeding Peer Supporter training. Since then she has helped at the Portman Children's Centre at their Friday baby clinics where she gets to know parents and babies, offers informal peer support and helps parents to access the wide range of services available at the centre.

Her kind and gentle approach, language skills and hardworking approach make her an asset to the team and helps to make parents feel very supported.

Kayrya says, *'I am happy that I became a champion, because I had learned so much in that short time such as improving my communication skills, getting more confidence to talk to other people and getting knowledge about the different communities around me.'*

*I would like to encourage anyone who wants to learn by giving time to the community around you to become a champion - you will learn more than you expect. Being a champion means you get more than you give - this is my belief.'*



### Church Street Community Champions: Facts and Figures

1199



VOLUNTEER HOURS

2264



RESIDENTS REACHED

988



ATTENDED 7 LARGE EVENTS

541



REACHED BY 5 PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

3806



ATTENDANCES AT 7 REGULAR COURSES OR GROUPS